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CORRESPONDENCE

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"A PROTEST"

BY

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Katharine Emily Cheatham

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September 30, 1918.

My Dear Mr. L...:—

There is no power in any resistance to the immutable law of God and to His Christ. Truth will finally rule mankind. Good is *now* ruling out evil, as is evidenced in the world-war. Christ is destroying that which has no right to exist, viz., sin and death, in individual and universal consciousness.

America, through Americans, is now demanding an ideal standard. They are revolting against the *reversal* of democracy, which has at last been exposed as nothing more nor less than human autocracy. They refuse longer to voice sentiments in word or song, which they heretofore ignorantly accepted, and to which they submitted, until compelled by spiritual progress, to resist.

If this is "the land of the free and the home of the brave," let every American be *"free'* to *denounce law standards,* viz., hate, envy, greed, and human autocracy as suggested in some of the words of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Let us hope that there is a majority of American men and women of spiritual aspirations and nobility of character, who are *"brave"* enough to defend our nation and the coming generation, from all who are attempting to deprive our country of an anthem, which would breathe the sentiments of true American manhood and womanhood.

Woe! Woe! to all who are unwilling to obey the immutable, irresistible law of righteousness.

The people cannot be forever lulled or deceived by those who are attempting to defend the sentiments of "The Star-Spangled Banner" by quoting the last lines of the poem, "our cause is so just," and "In God is our trust!" The efforts to obscure the insidious suggestions of the death-dealing missiles, "the rockets' red glare, . . . bombs bursting in air," "foul footsteps' pollution," and "the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes," are discerned and will be destroyed by the word of God, through Christ, who "is on the field, when he is most invisible."

I quote from your letter, "the good old pagan Greeks were worthy models for us. . . . man creates God in his own image." The Kaiser says *he* puts his trust in God and he is constantly appealing to this *god of his own creating.* Are you and I, dear Mr. L . . ., obeying the divine command, "I am the Lord thy God. . . . Thou shalt have no other gods [power] before me"—eternal Life, Love, and Truth?

With Paul, I have the moral courage to say to the scoffers of this hour, "THE UNKNOWN GOD, Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you" (Acts 17:23). Do Americans express God—omnipotent good—eternal Life and Love through the words of "The Star-Spangled Banner," which breathe the sentiments of animosity and all the qualities of the carnal mentality in its opening verses?

I know that "The Star-Spangled Banner" can never be adopted permanently as our National Anthem. How do I know this? Because God—omnipotent wisdom and intelligence, the God of prophets, seers, Christ Jesus, Mary Baker Eddy, and their followers who possess the Mind of Christ—spiritual power—will prevent it. The God of justice and mercy is not expressed in a contradiction of Himself.

Through the Associated Press of September 25th was received this message from General Allenby: *"Our cavalry have rescued Nazareth whose supermen described Christianity as a creed for slaves."* One cannot fail to perceive

the glorious spiritual significance of this tremendous statement. In the New York *Times* of September 26th, Alfred Noyes writes these lines:

The Emperor mocked at Nazareth
In his almighty hour.
The Slave that bowed himself to death
And walked with slaves in Nazareth,
What were His words but wasted breath
Before that "will to power."

. . . . . .

The trumpet blows in Nazareth.
The Slave is risen again!
Across the bitter wastes of death,
The horsemen ride from Nazareth,
And the Power we mocked as wasted breath
Returns, in power, to reign;
Rides on, in white, through Nazareth,
To save His world again.

The hour of restoration of all that is *real* and eternal is at hand. America will *eventually* become "the land of the free." I claim and shall exercise my divine prerogative to voice my righteous convictions. I claim the liberty of a follower of Christ to protest against evil in all its forms and to establish justice, honesty, and righteousness. I denounce license, but I demand the privilege of an American citizen to speak, act, and *live* according to the law of right and justice. I cannot submit to nor promulgate anything that is opposed to Truth, so far as I understand Truth.

On one side of the entrance of the Public Library on Fifth Avenue is inscribed: "Beauty, old yet ever new, eternal voice and inward man." On the other side of the entrance is inscribed: "But above all things Truth beareth away the victory." With the liberal and beautiful decorations, which during the war have appeared on Fifth Avenue, these reminders of the eternal Power and presence, or a God of Truth and Love, are the only ones I have seen on this avenue. Truth is *no longer* on the scaffold. The

new era will float banners upon which will be inscribed reminders of an ever present God in whom we trust, and who, according to His promise, will deliver us from evil.

Again I repeat, that I refuse to implant in the pure, plastic thought of the children of our nation, the seedlings of autocracy, hypocrisy, "foul footsteps' pollution," and all the discordant qualities which "The Star-Spangled Banner" expresses. I shall continue to teach and to insist upon the necessity of implanting in the virgin soil of the child consciousness, the healthy seedlings of Truth, honesty, purity, unselfed love, trust in God—the eternal Father—all that stands for health, joy, holiness, harmony, and immortality.

Woe! Woe! be unto all who resist Truth—Christ. Let Americans be "brave" and permit me my right to follow the dictates of my own spiritual convictions.

There are a large number of patriotic Americans who recognize the great issues of this hour. They are loyal to the spiritual ideals, upon which this nation was founded, and they agree with our President in his repeated emphasis for the necessity of rising to uphold and support these higher and spiritual ideals.

They will continue to *demand* and they will *obtain* their inalienable rights of conscience and freedom to exercise these rights. That they have not been permitted to voice their convictions on this vital subject is a proof that our nation is still held in bonds of human *autocracy* and is not *yet* "the land of the free and the home of the brave." Let us be honest as a people. Let us be true to ourselves, then it will follow "thou canst not then be false to any man."

October 1st. I was prevented from finishing this letter last night, and again am rejoiced to find, that President Wilson, as announced through the press today, has once more been spiritually moved to speak with solemn emphasis upon the imperative necessity of the rising of our nation to uphold the standard of pure democracy, upon

which it was founded. I do not feel that it was a chance correlation that I was impelled to write you at the same hour that the President was addressing his great message, in defense of woman, to the United States Senate, which is supposed to represent the highest democratic governing body in the world.

Hear these divinely inspired words of President Wilson:

> This is a peoples' war, and the peoples' thinking constitutes its atmosphere and morale. . . . If we be indeed democrats, and wish to leave the world to democracy, we can ask other peoples to accept in proof of our sincerity and our ability to lead them whither they wish to be led nothing less persuasive and convincing than our actions. . . .
>
> If we reject measures like this in ignorant defiance of what a new age has brought forth, of what they have seen, but we have not, they will cease to believe in us; they will cease to follow or to trust us. . . .
>
> The problems . . . will strike to the roots of many things that we have not hitherto questioned. . . . We shall need their [woman's] moral sense . . . to discover just what it is that ought to be purified and reformed. . . .
>
> This is my appeal. . . . No one can brush aside or answer the arguments upon which it is based. The executive tasks of this war rest upon me I ask that you lighten them and place in my hands instruments, spiritual instruments, which I do not now possess, which I sorely need, and which I have daily to apologize for not being able to employ.

Alas that any one should continue to try to hold this nation in bondage. Alas for the "Pharisees" who are crying democracy from the "housetops" and who are forcing the Chief Executive of

this nation to "apologize" to its people, because he is prevented by dense autocratic materialists, masquerading as representatives of democracy, from using the "spiritual instruments"—they who are fighting to uphold the "spiritual ideals" of this nation—to aid him in discovering what should be "purified" in our national consciousness.

That there are many spiritual thinkers today who are daring to voice their honest convictions is apparent. I quote from an article by Margaret Sherwood, entitled, "For Democracy," and which appeared in the October number of the "Atlantic Monthly." In touching upon the Americanization of the alien, she writes:

> What have we been doing, we citizens of longer standing, to whom has been entrusted the starry flag? . . . As our young men fight in the fields of France for an ideal, we should be fighting at home to bring into clearer vision of ourselves and others, the nature of that ideal. To this task of enlightenment we need to bend every energy, for an unintelligent democracy is the worst foe civilization has ever had. . . .
>
> The air is full of notes of exhortation and of song ushering in a new era. There is with us a consciousness of a need of reconsecration, of refreshing ourselves at the deeper sources of our national well-being, of defining afresh for ourselves and sharing with others the great and simple hope of democracy in its purity.

A letter recently received from one of the most noted educators of this country states:

> I am inclined to believe that a large percentage of the people agree with you in all you say with regard to "The Star-Spangled Banner," and a great many more would see light if they would only think as they sing. So many people sing this song without ever giving a thought to the

words and what they convey. In teaching children a new song I firmly believe in scanning the poem to see what it contains, and I think adults should be treated the same way and shown what poem scansion means to them. . . .

As you are aware, a great many people are afraid to say what they think in regard to the song in question, and the longer the war lasts the less they will express their feelings. I have yet to find one out of the many readers of your "Protest" here that does not agree with you, but they dare not open their mouths in some cases:

For instance, the dean of the Music Department in a local college, a close friend of mine, is forbidden by the president to express his feelings in the matter. But for that I have no doubt your "Protest," or at least excerpts from it, would have appeared in a local paper. In answer to a question, he said that he heartily agreed with you but must keep his views to himself and keep out of the public eye. I myself, being in the capacity of a public servant, am not allowed to air my views as I would like to.

So you see that while you have many sympathizers in the matter, it may be a hard thing to get them to take up the cudgels and fight.

I noticed your statement in regard to the Constituted Authorities of New York demanding that the children be compelled to learn the song in school. It may interest you to know that I had a somewhat similar experience last winter in. . . .

A society of women designating themselves as the "Parent Teachers' Council" met, proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that the children of the city should be compelled to memorize the words of "The Star-Spangled Banner." A full account of the proceedings was mailed to the

> Board of Education with a demand that the music teachers in school be commanded to teach the song at once. There was nothing said about the music of the song, but the Board concluded that it was a matter for me to handle, and in about two minutes I convinced them that I was fulfilling my duties here to the children and public alike and that was the last that was heard of it.

It would interest you to know, no doubt, that I am in receipt of a letter from Queen Mary of England in which she states that she has read my pamphlet, "Words and Music of 'The Star Spangled Banner' Oppose the Spirit of Democracy which the Declaration of Independence Embodies," and assures me of her interest in it, and also her interest in the words of the new National Anthem. "Our America."

There is a divine power working which will establish an American National Anthem. Any resistance to the law of spiritual progress is futile. The hour of decision is come. One must either follow in the line of light and righteousness or remain in mental darkness, which perpetuates war and its barbarous results. America will not remain in mental darkness.

You say, dear Mr. L . . ., that you teach music to children. Do you realize your responsibility and obligation to the children of this new era? What reply would you make to a little child who asked you the meaning of the words, "foul footsteps' pollution" or "the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes"? There are many thinking mothers who are awaking and who are resisting this despotic autocracy, which is endeavoring to *force* them to impress upon the minds of their children the vicious mental pictures which "The Star-Spangled Banner" expresses. They recognize the divine necessity of keeping the thoughts of their children pure, in order to make them good citizens, and they are, in this hour, crying out for a higher standard—the

true expression of America's claim to democracy through a National Anthem, which will incite to that which is good and pure.

Americans are beginning to understand, that only through insistence upon implanting the right thoughts in the child's consciousness can the right results be obtained. They are realizing that things are the manifestation of thoughts. Like cause, like effect. Thoughts evolve phenomena and phenomena are the result of thoughts. Paul says, "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). I rejoice that thinkers are coming forth who apprehend, that by thinking and singing evil thoughts, they will objectify those thoughts, and such conditions as we are witnessing today in the world-war, will continue.

America will *finally* awake to spiritual thinking, which will reveal "a new heaven and a new earth" wherein dwelleth righteousness and wherein "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things [thoughts] are passed away" (Revelation 21:1, 4).

The musical director of one of the largest military camps in this country writes me:

> I wish that you could have been present on the evening that we sang "Our America" at Camp. . . . Many of the men in the audience were sailing for France before daylight, and all of them left before the week was out and their treasured copies are overseas by this time. They learned this beautiful National Anthem quickly and gratefully. . . .
>
> Who can tell how far the influence thus sent into operation may spread! You are indeed doing a splendid thing in standing out so strongly, as you do, for the right principles of Truth and Love in this day when the world seems convulsed by the forces of evil, and the Anthem, "Our America," places the right emphasis on the con-

structive power of true patriotism, rather than on the destructive power of false patriotism. May its influence for good continue to grow!

After a recent patriotic gathering at the home of a well-known banker in New York City, I received this word from my host:

> I am glad if I have been helpful to your cause, and particularly to the bringing out of the new National Anthem which I hope will be generally adopted. I entirely agree with you; in fact I have had this feeling for over fifty years with the idea of trying to cure evil rather than seek revenge. It may be interesting to you to know that I expressed these sentiments before I came to this country, and I have now been here over fifty years.

The president of one of the largest trust companies in America has just written me:

> I have read with great interest your pamphlet concerning "The Star-Spangled Banner" and I appreciate the high-mindedness of your position. . . . I agree with you that a great many of the songs that are held dear by the community are not those that contain the highest sentiments. . . .
>
> Your ideas interest me very much and I shall appreciate it highly if you will give us five minutes of your time some morning to talk or sing to the employees of this company.

From the far Northwest comes a letter from a writer of special articles and short stories for magazines and newspapers:

> I read with the greatest interest your masterly "Protest." It is indeed timely and voices the sentiments of many earnest souls. That it will accomplish a vast amount of good and bring about a badly needed reform, is my firm belief. . . .

Your wonderful gifts of song and pen—your fine brain, your fearless soul and pure heart tell me that you can accomplish anything you choose.

I am glad that you have lived, that you live and that you will live forever!

Your "Protest" will prove very valuable to me in making quotations. I will welcome eagerly any further communication which you may choose to send.

Again thanking you for the good you are doing in helping to bring the sad world into the light and sunshine of Truth and Love, I am, . . .

The Governor of a near-by State, which has been the center of many of the most important events of our national history, writes me:

May I express to you my sincere gratitude for your most valued letter and article which you were good enough to mail me concerning the importance of a proper interpretation of the spirit of America in the songs of our people? I have read what you have sent with great interest and profit, and I trust that you will continue your propaganda until our whole people, marching and singing will rise to the highest plane of patriotic endeavor.

A business woman, the secretary to the president of a banking institution of international interest, writes:

Will you kindly send me several copies of your "Protest" so that I may circulate them among those who are hungering for just this message? . . . Today, yesterday, and on other occasions I have sent this petition to God, my Guide: "Grant to Kitty Cheatham an answer to her work and prayers, and to all who are working for higher ideals, so that America may

awake to a song which is the expression of the highest, noblest thinking."

Yours in the interests of the hearts of humanity.

A Chinese scholar, an editor of the most widely read Chinese weekly in the world, writes me:

It gave me much profit and interest to read your pamphlets. They gave me a new thought about the "Words and Music of 'The Star-Spangled Banner.'"

May I have the honor to get better acquainted with you in the future? . . . Trusting that success will come to you in your enterprises. . . .

I have just received a letter from a member of the Greek Parliament, who is now in America, representing officially, the Hellenic Government, from which I quote the following:

I am deeply impressed and touched by your mighty protest against autocracy.

I stand by your side in your very noble effort to destroy a false connection between Greece and America, as suggested by the degeneracy of the original words of "The Star-Spangled Banner," "To Anacreon in Heaven."

Our nations are eternally united through their ceaseless effort to establish divine democracy. The same spirit which stirred Paul to make his mighty protest 1900 years ago on Mars' hill, against the autocracy and idolatry which were holding the men of Athens in bondage, is the spirit which you voice in your protest.

It is the spirit which your President voices. America and Greece, and all men "of one blood" (Spirit) are united through this Spirit, whose mighty power is ending this war.

I was glad to have your new, noble American Anthem, "Our America," whose beautiful sentiments will redeem the world.

> I assure you that as a Greek I am very grateful for your sincere interest in our country and in our cause. Hellenism will recognize your support.

These are a very few of the many letters which I have received from all parts of America and from Europe. You must see, dear Mr. L . . ., that "God [is] within the shadow, keeping watch above His own," and that Christ's ambassadors are being revealed throughout the world. They, with all who love righteousness, will put an end to this hellish war and the satanic forces that caused it.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) KITTY CHEATHAM.

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